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ROBERT MELVILLE:

OR

CHARACTERS CONTRASTED,

BY THE

Rev. Rich. Cope, L.L.D., F.A.S.

AUTHOR OF

*History of a Religious Tract, The Plough Boy,
Meekness and Passion, &c., &c.*



ABERGAVENNY:

Printed and Sold by JAMES HILEY MORGAN,

SOLD ALSO

BY BALDWIN CRADOCK AND SONS, LONDON,
AND BY ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1827.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.



J. H. 1827-





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MELVILLE,

&c.

CHAP. I.

The anxiety of Parents for their Son.—Difficulties in procuring a proper situation for him.—A family professing but not possessing religion.—The report sent home.—Decision thereon.—Remarks.—A Father's address.—The parting.

“How valuable are good principles,” said Robert Melville, as he shut the door of the Warehouse, “the mind may be easily corrupted by such conversations as I am forced to hear from day to day; and were it not that I am enabled to look unto God for preservation, and to rely upon his aid, I should despair of being able to stand against what I see and hear.”

Robert Melville was an only son of very pious parents, who had educated him with peculiar attention, and watched the influence of their labours. Having passed through the days of infancy and childhood to their great satisfaction, they had the pleasure of seeing him arrive at that age when he could converse rationally and agreeably upon general subject

of, nothing to deplore but the visible unconcern of the family in regard to another world;" he concluded his letter thus: "I cannot let this moment pass without thanking you for all your attention to my real interests; from thy lips, my mother, I first learned to lisp a prayer to God! and my father's consistent walk and conversation, gave force and energy and confirmation to *his* declarations of love to Christ. Whatever I may think of other subjects, I shall never think otherwise than that *religion* is a *reality*,—but oh! the difference of my present situation! I hear nothing, I see nothing, but *the world*, from day to day. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What dress shall we wear? What speculation shall we make to increase our gain? are the constant questions proposed, while the great, the important, inquiry, 'WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED,' is neglected or viewed with indifference. Pray for me dearest parents, pray that I may hold fast that which I have, that I may be kept from dishonouring Christ; pray that I may shine as a light in the world, and that I may glorify God in the sight of them who honour Him with their *lips* while their *hearts* seem to be far from Him."

It afforded Mr. and Mrs. Melville sincere pleasure to receive this communication; but that pleasure was mingled with pain. They

often conversed upon the subject, and for some weeks hesitated as to the path they should follow. As the traveller when he comes to the place where four roads meet, stops his horse, looks first at the roads, then round to see if any one is near to solve his difficulties—and then between hope and fear proceeds on his way: so these good parents paused, reasoned, asked advice from others—prayed to God to direct them—and at length determined to settle their son for a time.

It was amusing enough to hear the opinions of the neighbours upon the subject of young Robert's removal from home. By some his father was commended, by others he was severely censured as having no regard to his son's spiritual interests. Mr. Melville was a man that knew the world, and what is called the religious world. On all occasions he determined to think for himself, to ask counsel of God, and to watch the leadings of His providence. He gave his son the best advice, reminded him of the Scriptures he had read, the sermons he had heard, and the prayers offered on his behalf. Admonished him to beware of evil company, to reverence the Sabbath, and never to neglect private prayer. Represented to him the necessity of *courage* in opposing sin, and in declaring his attachment to religion. "Whatever others do my dear,

described the *row* at the theatre, another how much wine he had taken with his friend Gay at the Hummums, a third rapturously applauded the songs at Vauxhall, and a fourth, devoid of shame, of decency, and of principle, described his unchaste and unhallowed amours. The question at length was put to Melville:—"Well, Master Robert, and whither did you steer last night?" Robert was silent, and continued writing. "Come, come," said Arthur Freeman, "let us have the answer—no simpering—I suppose you were among the *saints*—at *chapel*, eh!" The sound of *chapel* produced a loud laugh, in which all joined except Robert, who looked grave and remained silent. "Stop," said Henry Elworthy, "do not be too hard upon him, he will not be fond of chapel alway. A little of your training will take away his inclination for that, I have no doubt. *I* was a little scrupulous when I came amongst you first, but I think you cannot complain of me *now*." "No, no," rejoined Freeman, "not at all, you are a good fellow, and can drink and swear as well as any of us. If old father were alive and could look upon you now and then, (*tapping him on the shoulder*) he would see his son rather altered I think."

"God of His infinite mercy keep me from the paths of these destroyers!" said young

Melville to himself—"MAY HE preserve me from turning aside to folly!"

"Well Robert," said Freeman, "now for your answer, were you not at chapel last night?"

"I was—and intend to go still—young as I am, and unused as I have hitherto been to hear religion derided, I trust your conversation and your example will never produce in my mind any other sentiments than those of disgust and pity—*disgust* at your sins, and *pity* that you are so misled. I have been taught my duty, and am not only convinced of the importance of religion, but that such conduct and language as I have heard this morning are totally incompatible with its principles and precepts."

Freeman. "An oracle, a perfect oracle! parson Melville, we thank you for your sermon; old Whitefield could not have done it better—Hem."

(Mr. Le Monde enters and the clerks retire to their desks.)

"Good morning, gentlemen, I see you are taking it leisurely—Robert, I am glad to see you at your books. Industry is the way to wealth. Make out the invoices with care, pay attention to your writing, and avoid mistakes. Peter! *(calls the Porter)* be sure to see the goods for Hull safe on board the vessel

to-day—Pray, Mr. Freeman, has the bill on Lorimer's house been paid?—Elworthy, how is your mother? I heard a bad account of her health last night. I fear she is sinking, Sir, sinking fast. Poor dear woman! she has never fully recovered the shock of your father's death. He was a fine character indeed; an honest, upright, pious, man—a little too strict, perhaps, but no one could contradict him; he always proved what he said by the Scriptures, and I believe he was right. I hope, Mr. Elworthy, you will follow his instructions, and imitate his conduct—he died very happy—I shall never forget his last words to me; 'take care of my son—keep him, my dear friend, from the evils of London.' (*walks about much agitated.*) I have taken a great charge upon me. Pray, Henry, take care of yourself, and pray to the Almighty. A young man may soon go astray in the metropolis, and, indeed, in every other place, especially if he do not avoid dissipated characters."

Elworthy knew this, and that by painful experience. He was the only son of a worthy minister, who was suddenly taken from his labours to enjoy that rest which remains for the people of God. His widow, a woman of piety and intelligence, educated her fatherless child with care and assiduity. She took him with her to the house of God, and conscienti-

ously initiated him in the principles of religion. As he grew up he appeared thoughtful and steady, but having been placed at a public school by the kindness of Mr. Le Monde, he formed an acquaintance with a youth whose conversation and conduct produced a lamentable change in the manners of Elworthy. His mother perceived the alteration—she reasoned with him—wept over him—prayed for him, and obtained a promise of future amendment; but his principles had received a violent shock—his love for religion declined—he was restless in the house of God—obstinate, conceited, and refractory at home, and frequently staid out till a late hour. These things affected the already wounded spirits of Mrs. Elworthy, and she determined to place him in some situation where his conduct would be checked. But the limited income of her late husband had not allowed him to lay by any thing for sickness or old age, or for the support of his widow in case of his death. A few friends had raised a sum, the interest of which enabled her just to live, but she had no premium to offer, and she knew not where to find a friend who would take her son without one.

In this situation she applied to Mr. Le Monde, who very kindly offered to receive young Elworthy into his counting house for a term of years, which offer the mother gladly accepted.

Le Monde had many amiable qualities : he was the son of a Protestant Refugee, who came over to England in consequence of the Papal persecutions against true religion, and conjured his son to tread in his footsteps. The injunctions of the father were adhered to, so far as *profession* was concerned. Le Monde contended warmly for the Protestant faith, and attended public worship on the Lord's day regularly. He and Elworthy were juvenile friends, and their friendship continued till the death of the latter. But Le Monde was a *bustling* man of the world. Increase of business was his chief desire, and increasing gains his supreme delight. He was one of those whose

' Hopes and portion lie below,
' Tis all the happiness they know,
' Tis all they seek."

Mrs. Le Monde was a pleasant agreeable woman, but her mind was a perfect vacuum. She could talk of caps, gowns, laces, and jellies, form a window curtain with taste, and lay out a table with elegance, discourse on the beauty or deformity of her female friends with much good nature, but beyond this she was nothing ; her children were taught to dress and undress dolls, look at the pretty pictures in books, and break their new toys that they might have others ; but " the im-

provement of the mind" was never attended to ; it was a system not likely to be introduced.

Elworthy expressed the great delight he enjoyed in this family, for, in fact, he did as he pleased—when the hours of business were over he considered himself his own master, and went out and returned as he thought proper. Freeman, a young man of very corrupt principles and dissolute conduct, soon cast his eyes on Elworthy, and determined to ensnare him and make him his prey. He began by instilling into his mind doubts as to the authenticity of the bible, public worship, prayer, a future state, &c. but he did this, *like an infidel*, cautiously, and by degrees. He then took him to *see* the theatre, that he might form an *idea* of it! Invited him to a supper after the play was finished—took him into the country to spend the Lord's day with a few *respectable* friends, all without any expense to Elworthy! At length Freeman triumphed; Elworthy left off prayer, laid aside his bible, forsook the house of God, laughed at religion, derided the enthusiasts, loudly declaimed against '*the saints*' in the House of Commons, and joined with the *inhuman* and *brutal* in praising *pugilism* as promoting *manliness* and *courage*.

attentive to business and much devoted to the improvement of his mind. He endeavoured to retain the knowledge he had acquired at school, and, therefore, paid attention to his Latin and Greek studies, and laboured to extend his acquaintance with arithmetic, geography, &c., &c. He read a certain portion of the bible daily, marking down those parts which most impressed his mind, or in which he found any difficulty, thus acting upon the maxim of an excellent writer:—"When the time of youth is improved, and that time is laid out in the pursuit of wisdom, which others waste in idleness or folly, what an inexhaustible fund of knowledge is laid up for succeeding periods of life!—the mind is enriched in *mental* acquirements; and if, besides this, the youth has the *fear of God*, his soul will expand in spiritual knowledge, and grow in grace."

CHAP. III.

It is worthy of remark, that, in general, infidelity has little to do with reason or inquiry, but is commonly a disease of the heart more than of the understanding.

WILBERFORCE.

Influence of Infidelity—Sceptics unreasonable, although they make reason their God—Difference between freedom and licentiousness—Apostates from Religion are often depraved and tyrannical—Exemplified—An unwelcome Messenger—Late hours productive of mischief—The sentiments of an almost Christian—The Police Office—Mrs. Elworthy's increasing illness and anxiety—The Rev. Mr. Singleton's encouraging remarks—Religious education a blessing.

THE mind of young Melville was frequently distressed by the infidel and profane remarks of Arthur Freeman, (who had been seduced from his attachment to the Scriptures, and from his attention to public worship by an admirer of the late Thomas Paine,) and although his faith in the Divine authority of the bible remained firm and unshaken, yet when he read it, some of Freeman's observations obtruded themselves, and diverted his attention from its great and important truths. He had heard nothing of the kind while under his father's roof, and if there were any thing that was above his comprehension, (and there

are many such things in the book of *nature*, as well as in the book of *scripture*,) he was told to receive it on the veracity of the inspired writers; he was often taunted by Freeman to explain how sin entered into heaven? Why Adam was permitted to fall? How the conduct of Noah, David, Sampson, Peter, &c. could be consistent with their characters as good men? Sometimes he adduced texts, which he said were entirely contradictory; then he inveighed against the ministers and preachers of the Gospel; describing some as mercenary wretches, mindful only of the loaves and fishes; others as knaves and rogues, imposing on the weak and unlearned; and others as enthusiasts and fanatics, borne away by the strong current of their feelings. "A few," said he, "may be honest men, but they are a very few indeed, and even *they* are not necessary in this enlightened age. Nature is quite sufficient to teach us our duty to our Maker, (if there be one) and to each other in *this* world, and as to what becomes of us *hereafter*, I care not; I believe that as soon as we are put into the grave there is an end of us, and, therefore, as to your preparation for a future state, the enjoyments of heaven and the punishment of hell, why Melville, (*tapping his snuff-box*) it is all a *hum*; let us enjoy ourselves, I say, while we can, and

taste the good things that nature has so richly provided for us; *my* motto is, a short life and a merry one! if life must be short, (*walks about and sings,*) *Begone dull care, &c.*; we had a merry bout last night, fine sport, master Robert, I assure ye, I did not get home till *two* in the morning, and then my old dad got up and let me in, and gave me a proper set down at breakfast time. (*sings again,*) *But what care I for mam or dad;** I have some idea of taking a lodging for myself, and then I shall not be under any restraint, but go out and return when I please."

Melville.—Well, Mr. Freeman, if this is the *benefit* you have derived by relinquishing the bible, and abandoning religion, I think you are not a gainer, but a tremendous loser, and I fear the day will arrive when you will repent most bitterly, that you ever made such discoveries.

Freeman, (laughs) *ha! ha! ha!*—Now then for your *lecture*, I thought the spirit would move you soon.

Melville.—As to my lecture, Mr. Freeman, I pretend to nothing of the kind, but I know that your conduct, according to your own confession, is as hostile to *reason*, as it is to *revelation*; does not reason point

* These are some of the *sentiments* imbibed by visiting Vauxhall, the Theatres, &c.!!!

out the duty of children to parents ? Have we not often read and admired the conduct of the *pious Æneas*, (as Virgil styles him) towards his father Anchises ? *Paganism* itself would condemn your treatment of your parents. The voice of reason says, *revere parentes !* and does not the same voice declare, that *preservation of health* is an important duty, and that *late hours* are injurious to the health and character and income ? Is it reasonable that you should run into those expenses, which must eventually involve you in difficulties, and fix you deep in debt ? I do not say this is the fact *now*, but it is likely to be so in the end ; is it reasonable, that you should treat with disdain and contempt a book full of the best precepts, and of the purest morality—a book which brings into clear light that state of blessedness which philosophy, with all its advantages, could not explore—a book which contains promises for the afflicted and disconsolate—advice to the young, and comfort to the aged ? To reject such a book merely from the statement of a wild revolutionist in religion and politics, whose threadbare arguments have been constantly answered and rebutted—whose schemes, if carried into execution, would produce misery among the nations, and plunge the soul into despair—to reject such a book, I say, would be madness and folly in-

deed. On the supposition, however, that the facts recorded in the bible are *true*—that God will punish the wicked and reward the righteous.—What will become of *you*, dying in a state of impenitence and unbelief?

Freeman looked grave, and paused; at length, he exclaimed, ‘Well, well! there is something in your last sentence certainly; but, my dear fellow, Paine’s arguments are so *strong*, and he is so great an advocate for *freedom* in *politics* and *religion*, that——

Melville.—Excuse me, rather say *licentiousness*, than *freedom*, for ‘He is the free man whom the *truth* makes free.’ I have often heard my dear father say, that great reformers are generally great tyrants, and the history of the French Revolution proves it; I need only mention the name of Robespierre. I remember a man who lived near us, once a zealous professor of religion, but afterwards warped by the writings of Paine, whose constant cry was *liberty* and the Rights of Man; but his vicious practise explained the *nature* of his *principles*. While he had *his own* rights, he cared not for the rights of others, and when he departed from religion, he departed from order and decency; the poison of asps was under his lips, and his mouth was full of cursing and bitterness; he was a tyrant in his family, and displayed the same character in his conduct generally.

The Porter enters.—If you please, Mr. Freeman, there is a person who wishes to speak to you; he says he *must* see you directly; he has a paper in his hand, and, I think, looks like a *constable*.

Freeman.—Why did you not tell him I was not in the house?

Porter.—No, no, sir! (*shaking his head*) I will not tell a falsehood for any one; I wonder that a gentleman like you should wish me to do so.

Freeman blushes, and walks into the warehouse muttering.—Well, sir! what is your business?

Constable.—Read that paper, sir! (*Leaves the warehouse.*)

(*Freeman reads.*)—‘Mr. Arthur Freeman; you are hereby required to attend at the Police Office this day at 12 o’clock, to answer to certain charges brought against you by the watchman of the north division, &c., &c.’

Melville.—Was it really a constable, Mr. Freeman?

Freeman.—An unlucky business, indeed! After we left the tavern last night, where we drank rather freely, one or two of the party were rather in for it, and, unfortunately, molested the watchman in his box; I wish it had not happened! what excuse can I make to Mr. Le Monde for my absence?

Melville.—Tell him the truth, and act more wisely in future.

Freeman.—No, no! that will never do.—
(*pauses.*)—Now I have it; I will tell him my uncle wants to see me on urgent business.

Melville.—Ah, Freeman! sin brings sorrow; this is one of the evil effects of *late hours*; is *this* what the religion of nature teaches you? Will such things as these induce me to imitate your conduct? No, sir, my *fanatical* principles, as you have termed them, teach me to regard the *truth*—to be *temperate* in all things, to——

Freeman.—I cannot stay to hear the rest of your sermon; give Mr. Le Monde that note, and tell him I will return very soon—(*retires*).

Le Monde enters.—All alone, Robert; where is Freeman?

Melville.—He desired me to give you this note, sir.

Le Monde reads.—His uncle! I very much question the truth of this, but I will take no notice of it at present. We are now alone Melville, and it affords me a high degree of pleasure to express my satisfaction at your behaviour since you came hither: I am sorry that you have some very bad examples before you, but although I am not religious myself, God help me! yet I know how to value those that are really so, and, I am persuaded, that if

you pray to the Almighty, he will preserve you from being ensnared in any temptations; as to Freeman, he is a worthless fellow, and has, I fear, nearly *ruined* Elworthy, but I assure you, *I* am not to blame, for I have given them both good advice, and charged them to avoid bad company, taverns, and theatres, but in vain; they appear to be bent upon their ruin; they despise religion, and I have no confidence in those who do not esteem and follow its admirable dictates.

Melville expressed his thanks to Mr. Le Monde for his advice and good opinion, and assured him, that although he had not seen much of the world, yet he was determined, by divine assistance, to adhere rigidly to the instructions of his dear parents.

Freeman found his thoughtless companions at the Office, and, after a strict examination, the magistrate threatened to commit them for assaulting the watchman, until they found bail for their appearance at the Quarter Sessions; the watchman was, however, prevailed upon to make up the affair, upon receiving a compensation from the offenders, and after the sitting magistrate had given them a severe reprimand, they were suffered to depart.

Mrs. Elworthy's health continued still to decline; she had been attended by one of the most eminent physicians, but his efforts were

ineffectual, and, as the *last* resort, she was advised to remove into the country, and try what change of air might produce. Never did the consolations of religion appear stronger than in the support they administered to her mind; her faith in the son of God inspired in her a lively hope of the glory and felicity of the world to come, "I have no fear," said she, "of dying, for death will be my eternal gain; one thing only depresses my spirits, it is the visible change in my son's conduct, oh! my son! my son! And is it possible, that the prayers and instructions, and dying admonitions of his dear father, will prove ineffectual? May we not claim the promise made to Abraham, 'I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee!'"

"Madam," replied the Rev. Mr. Singleton, who had called to see her, "there is the greatest encouragement for you to hope that your son will be reclaimed, and brought to seek his everlasting salvation; but *you* may not be permitted to *see* this; your case is not singular; many eminently pious characters have been grieved by the unruly and rebellious conduct of their children, and some of God's honoured servants have sighed in the bitterness of their spirit, on account of their wayward family; an only son, whose pious relatives have ardently desired to see walking in the

truth, has even planted thorns in their dying pillow ; yet God has not been unmindful of their work of faith and labour of love. The important principles of religion may be obscured by the darkness of error, and the heart may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, but early religious instruction—the consistent godly example of the pious father—his daily earnest prayers for the salvation of his child cannot be obliterated ; careless as your son may seem to be, I am convinced, that he has intervals of serious reflection, and *who can tell*”——

“Oh, my dear sir, this encourages me” said the amiable mother, “*Who can tell ?* Perhaps *my death* may be the spiritual life of my son ! I will not despair—I will still hope. Did you ever know an instance of the kind ?”

“I have,” replied the minister, and he drew out his handkerchief, and wiped the falling tear——and paused for some minutes to give vent to his feelings.

CHAP. IV.

“What grave prescribes the best?—A friend’s; and yet
 From a *friend’s* grave how soon we disengage!
 E’en to the dearest, as his marble, cold.
 Why are friends ravish’d from us? ’tis to bind
 By soft affection’s ties, on human hearts
 The thought of death, which reason too supine
 Or misemploy’d, so rarely fastens there.”

*Rev. Mr. Singleton’s account of his son—Death of his
 wife—Happy conversion—Old habits not relin-
 quished—Borrowing money—Conscience not al-
 ways dumb—A bill presented for payment—
 Forgery, a tremendous crime—Followed by most
 destructive consequences.*

“EXCUSE me, dear madam,” said the venerable Mr. Singleton, “for not answering your interesting question immediately; a thousand occurrences have rushed into my mind, and past scenes of the most affecting nature presented themselves to my view. God blessed me and my late dear partner with a son, whose early years promised much future happiness. His disposition was truly amiable, and his attention to his various studies constant and unremitted. We brought him up tenderly, without indulging him improperly, for we strove to correct what was unruly, and to commend what was lovely and of good report. As he advanced to the age of twenty, we per-

ceived an alteration in his conduct, and thought we discovered a propensity to a vice which renders a man inferior to the brute creation, I mean he was fond of *drinking*. Not that he ever drank to excess so as to be intoxicated; but he was always *thirsty*, and took every opportunity of gratifying his inclination. I reasoned with him frequently upon the folly and dangerous tendency of his conduct, and he as constantly promised amendment. By degrees I discovered that his feelings in favour of religion declined; and that he avoided the company of his sisters, preferring to walk alone. His conduct affected us extremely, and preyed visibly upon the constitution of my dear partner. He saw this—but yet he continued to pursue the same course. Meantime his dear sisters were our comfort, and proved better to us than the son on whom we had fixed our fond affections. I must say briefly, that my dear wife died, after having given the most pleasing evidences that her son had been made ‘meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.’ Her last interview with my son was affecting beyond what I can express. Oh madam, she addressed him so tenderly, so faithfully, that every eye was suffused with tears, nor did his eye lack moisture. ‘Promise your mother,’ said she, ‘promise her before she departs, that you will pray against this

sin, that you will watch against it, and that you will let your sisters be your companions in your walks. Promise your *dying* mother, that in the strength of the Almighty you will forsake those places which have been the scenes of your frailty and disgrace.' Charles (for that was his name) was silent—the tears rolled down his cheeks—all was still, Oh! it was the solemnity of death indeed—nothing was heard except the vibration of the clock, which seemed to second the request of the dying mother. 'Hark! continued she—'hark! the clock tells you Time is hastening on, and bearing us, and especially *me*, into Eternity! Speak, Charles—my son—I cannot quit this world till I have your promise.' 'I will, dear mother,' said the deeply afflicted youth, and he sobbed aloud. 'Record it,' said the departing woman, 'record it, O thou blessed Saviour. Let his name be enrolled amongst thy followers, Let their people be his people, and their God his God.' And she sunk in my arms and expired."

Mrs. Elworthy—(greatly affected) But your son, where is he? How has he acted since?

*Rev. Mr. Singleton—*He continued for a long time very pensive, and even melancholy, frequently exclaiming, 'What will become of murderers of mothers? At length he opened

his mind to his dear sisters, and then to myself. I directed him to the Son of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. He found pardon and comfort. He is since happily united to a pious lady, walks in the fear of God, and often exclaims, "Oh! it was my mother's death that brought life to my soul."

Mrs. Elworthy.—Astonishing instance of the Lord's mysterious dealings indeed! You have revived my spirits, and imparted to my mind a hope of the most cheering nature.

Rev. Mr. Singleton.—Cowper's remark is striking, 'God moves in a mysterious way.' Do not cease to pray for your son, and may Jehovah grant you the 'desires of your heart, and fulfil all your petitions.' Farewell.

Notwithstanding the recent event in which Freeman was so conspicuous, it made no permanent alteration in his conduct. Dissipation leads to poverty, and his frequent excesses reduced him to so great a want of money, that he was not only constantly applying to his friends for assistance, but he adopted the ruinous practice of borrowing money from every young friend that he considered likely to answer his purpose. He had already drained Elworthy, and his next application was to Robert Melville. "My dear Melville," said he, one morning, "Can you lend me a pound note for an hour or two? I came out without

any cash, and I promised to pay a small bill to day." "I am sorry that I cannot comply with your request, Mr. Freeman," rejoined Melville, "but I could not conscientiously begin to assist you in your present expensive mode of living. My parents have entrusted me with a small sum, quite sufficient to answer my real wants, and it becomes me to act like a just steward."—"Well, Sir," replied Freeman, haughtily, "then you may keep it; I thought such *saints* as you profess to be, were forward in performing kind actions, but you are, I perceive, like the rest of such hypocrites."

"Permit me to add, Mr. Freeman, that I consider it an act of *kindness to you* to refuse, and I wish every one of your boasted friends did the same. I fear, Sir, that your present conduct will be ruinous to yourself, and most painful to your friends; and I wish it were in my power to convince you of your error, and to induce you to reform in time, for—"

"No more of your enthusiastic cant, I beg, I detest your religion, and your whole sect.—Here comes Elworthy, a good-hearted fellow, that never refused any thing I asked him. (*Elworthy enters the office*) Elworthy, be kind enough to lend me a pound note."

Elworthy.—How can you ask me, Freeman, you have had all my money already, and I know not where I can get any more.

Freeman.—Well, well, make yourself perfectly easy, I will take care you will not be a loser by me.

Elworthy.—One thing I have certainly lost by your acquaintance—all respect and regard for religion—and notwithstanding all you have said from the writings of Infidels, yet my conscience reproaches me terribly, and I often tremble when I think of judgment to come.

Freeman.—Pshaw! you are absolutely the most nervous fellow I ever beheld. Such things as Heaven, and Hell, and Judgment, are not credited by men of any spirit—they are only fit for women to talk about and to preach up to children. And that old-fashioned book, the bible, why even those who pretend to esteem it, do not act according to its rules, and seem as if they were ashamed of it.

Elworthy.—That may be; but it only proves the wickedness and depraved inclinations of men, as well as the strict morality of the bible. I confess it is too strict for me, and that were it not for your merry company, and the enlivening scenes of the theatre, I should be perfectly miserable. If the bible be true, you have certainly ruined me.

Freeman.—Now do you really think, Elworthy, that it is at all probable, that the Almighty would punish a man for swearing

an oath, or drinking a glass more than usual; or telling a fib?

Elworthy.—From what I have read in the Bible, it appears evident that every sin deserves God's wrath and indignation; that those who commit sin, and die impenitent, shall be turned into hell. This is certainly the statement of the Scriptures, true or false. I am often alarmed at the idea of dying, lest there should be a judgment to come.

Freeman.—For shame Elworthy, to encourage such weakness. But you have not yet resigned the prejudices of education; and I have reason to suspect that our young saint there (*pointing to Melville*) has been entertaining you with some of his *Tabernacle cant*.

Melville.—No, Sir, I have not spoken to Mr. Elworthy on the subject of religion. I sincerely wish he were what he once was while under his father's roof. But he has a mother still, and a mother's advice may yet prevail.

Elworthy looked pensive—and sighed—while Freeman, to draw off his attention from a subject which he knew might make a deep impression on his mind, enquired if he knew that the Hypocrite was to be acted that evening, and if he intended to accompany him? Elworthy signified his dissent, that he could

not afford it, and that he must relinquish the theatre or be ruined; that he felt his health materially injured by *late hours* and *excessive drinking*, to which he had been introduced, and that he was determined to retreat in time.

The entrance of a banker's clerk with a bill of £35 for payment; put an end to the conversation. Melville took an account of it; but expressed his surprise that no entry of it had been made in the bill-book, and that he would mention it to Mr. Le Monde, who would, no doubt, take it up in the course of the day. Freeman and Elworthy expressed their entire ignorance of any such acceptance having been made by Mr. Le Monde, yet it *appeared* perfectly correct.

When Le Monde returned from the exchange, Melville acquainted him with the circumstance of a bill having been presented for payment, and was then in the banker's hands. "Impossible, Sir!" said Le Monde, "I have accepted no bill of that amount—are you sure the acceptance was my hand writing?"—"I thought so," replied Melville, "it appeared to be your signature."

"Astonishing! but— — I will call at the banker's myself and examine it."

It is a lamentable fact that notwithstanding the numerous convictions and public execu-

tions for forgery, that so many persons are guilty of the crime. The question of capital punishments has been often discussed, and much has been said for and against them. Some would abolish them altogether as totally unavailing, and by no means deterring men from the repetition of offences. In a commercial country, forgery is unquestionably a crime of great magnitude, and generally committed by persons whose talents and education ought to have kept them from it. Ambition and extravagance have excited many to trespass against the law. The merchant who speculates to gain an immense property, and the rake who thoughtlessly lavishes his money to taste the pleasures of sense, without calculating that the speculation may fail, and that the pursuit of pleasure will eventually exhaust the most ample resources, are commonly the victims of temptation to forgery. Money *must* be had—Box-Tickets—Suppers—Coaches—Sunday Water Parties—an Evening at Cards—a Party to Vauxhall, together with a long list of et cæteras connected therewith are very expensive. They have caused the name of many a tradesman to appear in the Gazette; they have driven many to the King's Bench; they have ruined many a promising youth, brought him to an early grave, or driven him to commit forgery, by which he has come to an un-

timely end—his family disgraced; his parents' hearts broken by grief; and relatives and friends plunged into the depths of lamentation, mourning, and woe. Yet, notwithstanding the influence of education, and the awful example of public executions, the misery, and wretchedness, and devastation that are the certain concomitants of forgery—the awful, death-ful crime is still practised.

CHAP. V.

I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof,
That he is honest in the sacred cause.
To such I render more than mere respect,
Whose actions say that they respect themselves.

COWPER.

*A painful discovery—Anonymous letters—A party
—Cards—Advantages of religion—Novels—
—Reading for amusement—Decision and consistency
—Reflections thereon.*

It is easy to imagine what consternation filled the minds of Le Monde and his clerks, at the discovery of a forged bill! Suspicion was now all alive; but whatever might be the secret conjecture, nothing was divulged. Le Monde himself was indefatigable in his pur-

suit of the offender, but determined not to fix the charge upon the innocent. His first step was to take up the bill, and next to trace out those who had indorsed it. All that transpired he kept within his own breast, nor even mentioned any thing respecting the affair to any one in his own family. He had already seen four of the parties, through whose hands it had passed, but one of those whose name appeared, could not be found. Yet *Le Monde* had strong suspicions, which induced him to watch diligently, and to commence an examination of his warehouse goods. He discovered a vacancy in some of the shelves, and that many yards of superfine cloth was missing! While this was in agitation, he received a note one morning stating that all their attempts to discover the drawer of the bill would be in vain, for the delinquent was in his own house! There was no name to the note, the writer apologized for the omission by the circumstance of the delicate nature of his communication.

Anonymous letters are generally regarded as the resort of mean and cowardly spirits. Many an excellent character has been grieved by the reception of an abusive letter, fraught with unfounded insinuations, the production of one, who, like a base, evil minded assassin, sought an opportunity to stab in the dark. Some worthy ministers of the gospel have not

escaped an attack from this masked battery. An epistle of this sort was once foisted into the hymn book of a minister, that he might read it at the commencement of the service on the Lord's day morning! as if the writer desired to distract the mind of God's messenger, and grieve his heart when about to deliver his solemn and important message!! There may be instances which may justify an anonymous epistle, but they are very rare! Such productions are for the most part badly received; the writer is supposed to be a secret enemy, who takes this method of expressing his malignant disposition towards the person addressed.

The mind of Le Monde was much agitated. He scarcely knew in whom he could confide. The property that had been secretly conveyed away was by no means inconsiderable, yet he knew not the exact amount. He maintained his resolution to take no further steps, but to observe carefully and diligently passing events. The storm that had arisen was at length appeased, and a calm succeeded; but it was the "treacherous calm," which indicated the approach of a still more violent tempest.

Melville had much to try the nature of his principles, and the reality of his religion. Every method had been resorted to in order to

induce him to visit the theatre, and to form one of a party to Vauxhall. Sometimes a box ticket was forwarded to him—at another time he was invited to spend an evening with a friend of Elworthy's, where there was to be a musical party. Melville accepted it, but to his utter astonishment, cards were introduced! “Come, Mr. Melville,” said an interesting young lady, “I hope you will join us at cards. We mean to have a little music presently.” “I never play, madam,” said Melville. “Not at cards, sir?” “No madam.” “Then I suppose you have some religious objection to them.” “My objection is, that it occupies time without affording any remuneration, to which I might add, that it opens the door to a train of evils—excites bad tempers—produces quarrels—and leads to gaming and other vices. Were there no other evils attached to it, this would be sufficient—that it induces a habit of *trifling*, and detaches the mind from solid and beneficial pursuits.” “Well, sir, if you have serious objections I will not press you. Then I suppose you do not play at backgammon, draughts,” &c. “No madam, I engage in nothing of the sort.” “Oh! dear, sir, what a mopish life you must lead! I presume then you never go to the play, nor to any place of public amusement!” “No madam, I have no desire for such things.”

"Poor young fellow," said an elderly matron, "I dare say he would sooner go to hear preaching. I presume, sir, (*addressing herself to Melville,*) your parents were very religious, and that you were brought up in that way."

"They were, and are still very conscientious in their profession of religion, and certainly taught me that one part of religion consisted in not loving the world."

"Oh! but my young friend, God Almighty designed these things for our recreation and happiness."

"I have never read that in the Scriptures, madam."

"The Scriptures! my young friend, Oh dear, we must not read them too much, for they are very mysterious, and we must leave our spiritual guides to explain them to us, for my part I see no harm in an innocent game at cards. There are many who do not play that do worse. Better play at a friendly game than scandalize our neighbours."

"I see no necessity for scandal, madam; I believe you will acknowledge that there is more scandal at a card-table than in any other situation."

The matron made no reply, and a silence of some minutes ensued, which was at length interrupted by a young gentleman dressed *à la*

dandy, tightly begirt with stays, and decorated with a quizzing glass, who, turning to Melville, said, "I suppose, sir, you *preach*, sometimes." No sir, I am happy to be a hearer." "Ha, ha, well, 'pon honor, I think you would make a good preacher. I suppose you never smile nor indulge in a joke."

"I do not know why you should suppose this. If you consider me to be religious, you ought to know that 'religion is the soul of happiness'—that it banishes sorrow, and chases despair from the heart—that it guides into the way of peace, and produces real and permanent delight. So full of joy itself, that it seeks not such auxiliaries as have been referred to in this conversation. Allow me, sir, to recommend you to study the subject seriously, and you will soon be convinced that there is every thing in real, vital religion that conduces to cheerfulness."

The young dandy dropped his glass, and bowed assent to the remarks of Melville. He felt that he could not maintain a conversation with one who appeared to be so capable of defending his subject. The very presence of a good man has a powerful influence on the gay and dissipated, and although they may not accord with his principles, or assent to what they term his *preciseness*, yet they cannot but approve his conduct.

A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives.

A manly unequivocal avowal of attachment to heavenly things, is highly commendable, and indispensably necessary, and when it is combined with a modest humble demeanor, it will always be received with respect, even by persons of a hostile character.

The conversation that ensued, suspended the introduction of cards, and music was eventually introduced. Some delightful pieces from Handel were played by a young lady, with peculiar taste, and admirable execution. Cake and wine were now brought in, and a short but lively conversation closed the evening, in which Melville modestly expressed his sentiments concerning many works which had been mentioned, frequently declaring the delight he experienced in history, poetry, &c. Novels were referred to, and Melville being asked his opinion on them, observed, that he considered the far greater number of them to be not only injurious to the morals, but productive of serious consequences. That circulating libraries, where novels were principally lent, were an evil not only to respectable young ladies, but especially to servants, whose time and money were wasted, and ideas of the lightest and most pernicious sort infused into the mind.

"But there are some good novels," said the dandy.

"Oh certainly" exclaimed the venerable matron. "I have read *thousands* of them in my life, and I have admired some *few* of them as containing very good sentiments.

"Only a *few* of them" said Melville! "It is on that principle I do not make them a part of my reading, for to use the remark of Dr. Young, 'If a man were to find one pearl in an oyster, out of a million, it would not encourage him to commence fisherman for life.'"

"Then you do not read to be *amused*," said the dandy.

"My time is too limited to read for mere *amusement*," rejoined Melville. "I endeavour to blend the *utile et dulce*, for I have been taught to make much of time, and to value *moments*, and therefore I endeavour to abstain from what is unprofitable and to deliberate before I accept an invitation, determined if possible either to do good or to get good."

There was something in the manner of Melville that commanded approbation, and when he had taken his departure, even the dandy exclaimed that he was a charming lad, although his ideas were singular.

"That arises from his education" said the matron, "probably a little intercourse with fashionable society, will rectify his prejudices.

Yet I could wish that some of my children were equally promising. At any rate we could not reply to his remarks with any chance of success."

"I could have *joked* them away," said the dandy, "but he soon despoiled me of that weapon, and he looked so *grave*, that I was completely silenced."

After Melville had retired to his room, he began to reflect on the incidents of the evening. He perceived the importance of resolution and consistency. 'If a man be my disciple, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.' He *must*, for the law of the kingdom of God is absolute. He that is a friend of the world is an enemy to God. This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith." A constant warfare must be kept up. Watchfulness and prayer must be perpetually resorted to. There are in every town persons of the worst principles, whose sole delight is to corrupt the youthful mind, and when a father sends a child from home he needs to pray that God would keep him from the evils of the world. Infidels, gamesters, profligates, whoremongers, and adulterers are to be found in the common pothouse and superb hotel, in the humble cottage and stately mansion. Abandoned minds take a satanic pleasure in leading a youth from

the path of virtue. They call darkness light and light darkness, evil good and good evil. Like their grand progenitor, they adopt the maxim:

To do ought good shall never be our task
But ever to do ill our sole delight!!

Melville determined that nothing should move him, but he determined this in the strength of God, and having committed himself to the divine protection he calmly retired to rest, and sunk on his pillow,

As in the embraces of his God
Or on his Saviour's breast.

CHAP. VI.

"How different will be the dying reflections of that parent whose earnest endeavours have been unhappily defeated by the subsequent and voluntary perversion of his child, from him who will reasonably aggravate his pangs, by transferring *the sins of his neglected child, to the number of his own transgressions!*"

H. MORE.

Religious Education—Evils of inconsistency in Church Members—Tragedy followed by a farce—Mrs. Elworthy's illness—Address to her son—Reflection—Soliloquy overheard—Unexpected advice—Mrs. Elworthy's letter.

It is an abundant source of consolation to a Christian parent that the religious education

of his child has not been neglected; that while he has been anxious to fit him for a station in this life, he has not omitted to train him for the world to come. The pious Mrs. Elworthy was comforted by this thought. In conjunction with her dear partner, she had pressed upon the mind of her son the importance of the one thing needful. As soon as he could speak she taught him to utter a prayer, and by degrees, to repeat hymns and other compositions which were likely to be retained in his memory. He was taken to the house of God, and became the constant subject of prayer in the family; as he grew up, he was appointed to read sometimes the hymn, and at others the chapter that he might be initiated in the things of the kingdom of God. He was then desired to write his thoughts upon some text of scripture, and at length produced a sermon upon a given passage. By these means he acquired a *knowledge* of the word of life, but alas! it was knowledge that, being *external*, only puffed up, and although appearances were favourable, yet they were not to be depended upon. His removal from home was an event that was to *prove* his character, and it did prove it. When he first heard Freeman converse he was shocked. Hitherto he had been totally unaccustomed to profane oaths and lewd discourse. The con-

versation he had listened to at home, was connected with heavenly things : but now, pleasure, excess, dissipation, were the favorite themes. He soon began to hear as a critic, found fault with the style or manner of the preacher, wanted to hear something new, and heaped up to himself teachers, having itching ears. His careless behaviour in the house of God was observable and became a subject of grief to many.

One thing that accelerated his declension from the right way was the inconsistent conduct of some that belonged to the place of worship that he attended, and they were members of the Church !! When the sermon was over they returned home, but not to meditate; not to converse upon the word of God ; no, it was to notice some peculiar expression ; it was to descant on the dress of some of the hearers ; it was to complain of the *length* of the sermon, or, that there was nothing *new* in it. Visitors would sometimes arrive, and then scandal and defamation came forth. *Report* say they and *we* will report it; in a word, the unscriptural conduct of these pretended saints, these unhallowed, unworthy, partakers, of the Lord's supper, by disgusting the mind of Elworthy, lowered the importance of religion, and he thought less and less of its magnitude every day.

It has often been observed : "after the tragedy comes a farce." Might not this be said frequently upon the Lord's day ? When the truly tragic scenes have been depicted, the tragic scenes of our blessed Lord's agony, his incomparable sufferings in Gethsemane ; the unparalleled indignity at the bar of Pilate which he endured, the mockings, the buffetings, the taunts, the reproaches, and, to crown all, the painful, shameful, lingering death of the Cross to which he submitted, the thrilling, heart-rending cry in the hour of his greatest conflict and desertion ; My God ! My God ! Why hast *thou* forsaken me ? How many *weep* at the recital preparatory to the *laugh* which is to follow ! Yes, they *weep*, but they are not such tears as angels weep ; yes, they weep, but they are not the tears of the humble penitent ; not the tears of the heart melted by love divine ; they are the tears of the crocodile ; they weep with the church that they may laugh with the world ; they hear of the *meekness*, and *mildness* of the Son of God, that they may return home and indulge their rage, their anger, their slander, their evil-speaking ! The tragedy is over--the comic scenes are introduced--the tragic dress is thrown off--the Pantomimic apparel is put on ; thus they exhibit a striking illustration of the *plain*, but *forcible* saying which contains in it a severe cen-

are on the one hand, and wholesome instruction on the other, '*Saints abroad, devils at home.*'

It has been remarked already, that the conduct of Elworthy had affected the spirits of his fond parent. Her strength declined; her worldly comforts were withered; she had no husband to encourage her. In losing him, her best earthly friend was removed! To complain to others of her child, she could not, and therefore she bore her grief secretly. Yet she had a *friend*, into whose ear she could utter the plaintive tale and the mournful recital of her woe. She had a friend whose advice she could freely ask and on whose assistance she could confidently rely. He was a *tried*, an *approved* friend; the same in adversity as in prosperity; the same in sickness as in health. This friend never slighted her, never refused his aid. He was the friend of her youth, the friend of advancing years, an Almighty, everlasting friend,—it was God.

Removed into the country, she now and then received a visit from her son; and she embraced these opportunities of speaking to him freely and affectionately upon the subject of religion. But he observed a sullen silence, nor could she draw the least favourable circumstance except a tear that now and then wandered from

his eye, and which he endeavoured to repress. "All I can cleave to, said she to him, is the confidence I have in the truth, that you are in the hands of God; that you are, and have been, the subject of many earnest prayers; and that the sentiments which, in early life, were impressed upon your memory, cannot be altogether obliterated; conscience, my dear son, may be for a time stupified, but it will at length awake and speak in notes of thunder. Hear, O ! hear its voice *now*. This is the day of salvation, this the golden opportunity, while life and breath and being last. Should I never address you more, remember that I have led you in the good and the right path. *Strive* then to enter in at the strait gate, for many will *seek* to enter in and shall not be able;" she ceased, and Elworthy took his leave.

As he returned home, he revolved in his mind past events and present circumstances. At one moment he resolved to alter his conduct, to renounce his associates, and to have nothing further to do with Freeman; then he began to reflect on the reproaches he would receive, and the ridicule and scorn he would experience. He knew that excesses had already injured his health, and nearly exhausted his resources, and a text of Scripture darted into his mind and stood like an angel with a drawn sword before him, "what *fruit* hadst thou

in those things of which thou art now *ashamed*, for the end of those things is death." Ah said he, "I feel that the way of transgressors is hard. I am in this way but how to retreat, Oh! there's the difficulty! He spoke this in so loud a tone of voice, that a plain looking man who was on the other side of the hedge heard him distinctly, and exclaimed, "Why, escape for thy life, look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain, escape to the mountain, to the *mountain*, my young man, lest thou be consumed."

Astonished, surprised, and confounded, Elworthy halted.

"Did you speak to me?"

"Certainly young man, I see you are in a difficulty; you are gone from the path, take my advice, Go to your heavenly Father and say, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, Go and ask him for mercy and pardon and eternal life, Go now, delay not, for time is departing and eternity is hastening on."

"Pray what is your name."

"Name, young man, why that's no matter, but thank God I am not ashamed of my name, though I am of my sins; my name is John Holmly, I am a labouring man and I live in the cottage just at the eighth mile stone. Poor in this world, but, blessed be the Lord, rich in faith and an heir of the Kingdom."

"Thank you," said Elworthy, "for your good advice."

"You are right welcome, and I wish you good night, God bless you and your parents too,"

Elworthy passed on and sighed deeply. "Parents! Ah! I shall be soon left destitute of both. My Father gone already, my mother following him rapidly. I shall have none to comfort me, none to advise, none to help me!"

The lark was now soaring high and chanting its evening song, the sun was just sinking into the western ocean, all around was silent and tranquil, favorable to reflection, nothing to disturb, save the gentle rustling of the leaves and the waving of the yellow corn nearly ripe for the sickle.

"Escape for thy life," repeated Elworthy, "like Lot I am in the midst of Sodom too, my life, my soul in danger, fool that I have been to listen to that base despiser of that which is good, and to follow him in all his infamous practices, but I *must* escape from his grasp." The words of the honest labourer constantly sounded in his ear. He arrived home but not to rest, for he was constantly interrupted by the words "Escape; Escape."

The illness of Mrs. Elworthy continued to increase. Her Physician at length declared that nothing more could be done for her. She

received the intimation with all the calmness and resignation of a Christian. Often she reviewed the past days of her life, the period of her conversion to God, the gracious providences that had followed her, the comforts that had sweetened her path, and though she wept, it was when she was overpowered by the goodness of God, and melted by the sunshine of his presence. The removal of her dear departed husband did indeed appear to her mysterious. It was an event that was continually present in her thought, and she found it, at times, a difficulty to say, "I know O Lord that thy judgments are right;" yet when she considered *the end*, when she contemplated wisdom, power, and goodness, combined with faithfulness as engaged to bless and save her; that all afflictions were light when compared with eternal glory, the thought soothed her spirits, strengthened her faith, and tuned her lips to sing, "He hath done all things well." But her son lay near her heart, and although weak and exhausted, she resolved, if her strength would allow, to address a letter to him. After some days she despatched the following;

"My dear, dear, Son,

The light of this world is rapidly closing on me, and soon, very soon, this world will be

nothing to me. I am preparing to leave it, but in doing this, I cast my eyes upon you, once a fruitful source of my earthly happiness; with a mother's fondness, I gazed upon you when cradled in my arms, I caught your eager endeavour to pronounce my name, I prayed for you, instructed you, committed you to God, intreated you to seek him, to honour him, to devote yourself to him for ever and ever. Why, O why have you forsaken him. What have you gained by neglecting him. Return to him, your mother *intreats* you to do this. Your afflicted dying mother.

.....

.....

I resume my pen, a little revived like the expiring flame that yet quivers in the socket. Forsake, my dear son, the society of the vicious and the abandoned, the unholy and the profane. They *have* ruined many, and will be the ruin of numbers more. Their end is destruction, their glory is in their shame, pray earnestly to God for his grace to assist you, for without that you can do nothing. As to myself I can rejoice in the pleasing delightful prospect of an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, absent from the body, shall be present with the Lord. Delightful thought!

"O glorious hour, O blest shade,
I shall be near and like my God!
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul."

Farewell, my dear Henry, remember
Your affectionate mother,
Hannah Elworthy.

CHAP. VII.

"Grace is an immortal seed, cast into an immortal soul, that will bring forth immortal fruit. What sins are there which grace cannot pardon? what heart is there which grace cannot soften? what soul is there which grace cannot save?"—MASON.

Wisdom of Providence—Joseph—The female captive Visit to "the cottage at the eighth mile-stone"—Interesting conversation—Grace produces a striking change—Family prayer—A good resolution—Carried into effect—Feelings of a mother—Religion cannot be hid—Fears of Le Monde and Melville—Backwardness of young persons to disclose their religious feelings.

"Those who deny Providence are as much Atheists as those who deny a God; and, indeed, the greatest Pagan philosophers acknowledged it, and Plato, in his Dialogues, pronounces those mad, who deny an overruling Providence." To this sentiment of the great Carnock, no one can withhold his assent. The history of the world, and the lives of in-

dividuals, illustrate the fact. When a man leaves his home in the morning, it may appear altogether indifferent whether he pass through one street or another; and yet, some important event may transpire which may have an influence upon the remainder of his life. Envy and malice induced Joseph's brethren to sell him to the Midianites; from the Midianites he passed to the house of Potiphar; and thence, by false accusation, into a prison! A watchful Providence was continually over him, brought him out of the prison, introduced him to the king of Egypt, and made him instrumental in preserving the lives of the patriarchs and their families. (*Gen. l. 20.*) By the same Providence, "a little maid" was taken captive by a band of Syrians, torn from her parents and relatives, and carried into a strange country. Here she is introduced into the family of Naaman, the commander-in-chief of the Assyrian army, and at length becomes the instrument of good to her master, by her timely mention of the prophet Elisha. By this means Naaman is cured of his leprosy, and resolves henceforth to sacrifice only to "the Lord." (*2 Kings v. 2—17.*) Who, that reviews his life, does not discern some unexpected appearances of Providence in his favour? Who cannot sing of the wonderful acts of the Lord, and ascribe greatness to our God? Who will

not join the sweet singer of Israel, and exclaim, He led us forth by the right way, that we might go to a city of habitation?

The words of John Holmly still sounded in Elworthy's ear. Nothing had made so deep an impression. They were not like the scar of the arrow through the air, nor as the furrow produced on the ocean by the keel, they inflicted a wound which pleasure and diversion could not heal. 'ESCAPE FOR THY LIFE' followed him every where, and he conceived a strong affection for the person who uttered them, although unknown. The most potent medicine may be carried by a feeble messenger, and the efficacy of the word of God depends not on might nor power, but on the Spirit of the Lord. It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the Spirit that comforts, the Spirit that applies and seals the truth to the heart, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, freedom from the predominant influence of the world, freedom from the tyrannical, degrading, destructive, power of sin.

There was a time when Elworthy would have despised the thought of being instructed by a day-labourer. He would have said, scornfully, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned." But now, he longed for an opportunity to converse with him. He recollected 'the cottage at the eighth mile

stone, and determined to visit it. Having obtained leave of absence from Mr. Le Monde to spend two days with his mother, he availed himself of that permission to accomplish his wish. Arriving near the cottage, about half past eight in the morning, he reclined for some minutes against the mile-stone. It was a small neat place, a little garden in front, laid out in a tasteful manner; a jessamine crept along the wall, and around the door bloomed the lovely rose—the beds indeed were small, but they contained flowers of a superior order; while the well-weeded alleys evinced the care and attention of the occupant. Elworthy opened the wicket gate, and gently tapped at the door—"Come in, friend," said a voice, that he recognized to be John Holmly's. The good man and his family were surrounding a table, partaking their morning's repast. At the sight of Elworthy they all rose up—"Servant, Sir," said John Holmly, and this was re-echoed by the wife and children. "Pray do not disturb yourselves," said Elworthy, "I wish to speak a few words with you."

"Pray, Sir, sit down, if you will condescend to take a chair in our humble dwelling," said Sarah Holmly, "have you walked from town this morning? I fear you are tired."

"Not at all, I thank you—I will take a

chair, provided I do not interrupt your breakfast."

"Oh, no; you will not interrupt us," said the husband; "I sometimes wish I had a better apartment to receive a gentleman in; but, Sir, it is useless to wish. If I had known the value of religion in early life, I should be in different circumstances now. but, by the grace of God I am what I am."

Here I raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by HIS help I'm come,
And I trust, by HIS good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wand'ring from the fold of God,
He to rescue me from danger,
Interpos'd HIS precious blood.

Elworthy sighed—and looking earnestly asked, "Do you remember speaking to a stranger some evenings since?"

"Let me see. a few evenings since (*pauses*)—why, sir, I can't recollect the circumstance."

"No. Did you not say to a young man, 'Escape for thy life?'"

"Yes, yes, I do—Ah! I have often thought upon that there young man; he seemed in a great deal of trouble—quite in a melancholy, I thought—I fear he has fallen into bad company, for he spoke of the way of transgressors."

“He did so—for he has found it to be a hard way, and his great difficulty is in getting into the way that leadeth to life eternal.”

“I suppose you be the young gentleman, Sir? Well, I am right glad to see you in my little cottage. Why, Sir, as I told you then, so I say now, ‘Escape for your life, escape to the mountain’—no place of safety else; none, sir, I assure you; I tried the world for happiness, but it gave none; I was an enemy to all seriousness, and hated those who regarded religion; I pretended to despise the Bible—became dissatisfied with my country—talked against the king and government, and swore I would go and live in foreign parts. I think at that time there was not a more abandoned wretch in existence. But O the greatness of sovereign mercy!—the depth of the riches of the goodness and wisdom of God! He stopped me in my awful career—looked on me—smiled, and bid me live. O how happy have I been since that period!”

“But you had no religious instructor in your youthful days?”

“O yes, Sir; my parents were both truly pious people, they took me to the house of God, taught me to reverence the Lord’s day, and impressed on my mind the duty of prayer; but when I grew up I fell into bad company, which soon ridiculed me out of my esteem for re-

Ngion, and drew me to the public house, where I passed my evenings, and acquired every bad habit, till at length I had not a penny to help myself, and I was then obliged to take any work I could procure. I tremble even now, when I reflect upon my past life. Blessed be the grace that pitied me, that called me out of that awful state of darkness!"

"How were you brought to see the error of your ways?"

"I was strolling about one evening, before I was married to Sarah, and happened to pass by a chapel—a voice arrested my attention, and I went in, out of curiosity, to hear what the preacher had to say. He was but a plain man, but he described my character so exactly, that I thought he must surely have known me. He called upon me and others to 'repent and return to God with all our hearts,' assuring us that the Lord Jesus Christ would receive us, and forgive all our sins. Well, Sir, I went out, as you may suppose, very thoughtful and much concerned; I read my Bible, and tried to pray for the mercy of God. He heard my prayers—I regularly attended divine worship afterwards, left all my former companions, and.....

"But how could you leave them, did you not experience their ridicule?"

"Yes, yes; but what was their ridicule,

compared with the worth of my soul? when the Word of God said, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you. The friendship of God is worth more than all the world.'

"And have you been happy since?"

"Happy! Can I be otherwise, when the Lord is my portion! I was never happy till I gave myself up to God. But (*looking at the clock*) I see my time is gone. Come, wife, bring the Bible."

The good man then read a portion of scripture, and offered up an earnest prayer to God, commending the family and their concerns to him, and beseeching him to bless the young stranger and give him his grace, that he might be preserved and kept from the evils of the world.

Elworthy was so overcome when he rose from his knees, that he could scarcely thank honest John for his prayer for him, except by a cordial shake of the hand. "Farewell, Sir," said John, "I shall be glad to see you again."

Sarah gazed at Elworthy, and said, "Really, Sir, although you are a stranger, yet you are so like my late dear master, that you seem quite natural to me. Dear man! I shall never forget him; no, never, never. Excuse my weeping, Sir, but he was the means of bring-

ing me acquainted with the blessedness of religion. I can't tell you any more now; but when you come again we will talk of it."

"Thank you, Sarah, I shall be glad to hear your account," said Elworthy, and taking his leave, proceeded to visit his mother. He found her in a languid and enfeebled state, but possessed of that joy which arises from a sweet sense of pardoning mercy. The scene was truly affecting. The tide of filial love flowed strongly, and Mrs. Elworthy never felt her son so dear to her as at this period. He related all that had occurred since he last saw her, and declared his determination, in the strength of God, to forsake his associates, and to pursue the ways of religion.

"Blessed be thy holy name," said the enraptured mother, with a countenance illuminated with celestial joy. "Blessed be thy holy name, thou God, that hearest and answerest prayer! At length thou hast given me the request of my heart. Now I am ready to depart. Mine eyes have seen thy salvation! O Henry! O my son! Do I see thee again turning towards the Lord?" "Pray for me, dear mother, pray that I may not again turn aside to folly. I now begin to feel my weakness, to see my danger—my heart is deceitful, desperately wicked, I dare not trust it."

"Look to God, my son—He is a present

help—A sure refuge—In all thy ways acknowledge HIM, and HE will direct thy paths.” The rest of the time was spent in the most delightful and profitable conversation, and Elworthy took leave of his tender mother, promising to visit her again in a few days.

My reader will readily conclude, that the alteration in Elworthy’s conduct did not pass by unnoticed. He said little to any one; but that little was spoken in a manner so totally different from his former manner, that it attracted the attention of the whole family. He appeared thoughtful, and as if something oppressed his mind. His evenings were spent at home, and his books were his constant resource.

Mr. Le Monde was a man of observation, and instantly recognized the change in Elworthy; but the cause was unknown, and he sometimes feared it arose from a sense of guilt. Yet he would not indulge his suspicions, and trembled while he suspected. Robert Melville, too, was not without his apprehensions that Elworthy had a weight on his conscience, and although he was civil and courteous to him, yet he did not encourage him to open his mind. Elworthy needed encouragement, but was afraid of himself, lest he should again be ensnared. The only one that he

could talk with on religious topics was his friend John, "at the eighth mile stone," and he longed for the time to come, when he should have another interview.

It is to be regretted that many young persons are so tacit in regard to their *religious* feelings! How backward are they to express what they *feel*, to disclose the secret workings of their minds—their doubts—their difficulties—their desires—their joys! Some indeed there are who endeavour to *conceal* their love to Christ, and their attachment to his people. Happy are those who meet some in their progress to Zion, who, like themselves, are on the Lord's side, but *secretly*. When such are known to each other, they become mutual helps, and prove, that "two are better than one." If such young persons would express their feelings to their minister, how would it gladden his heart—what joy would it produce in the minds of those Christians who have borne "the burden and heat of the day." If such would attach themselves publicly to His people how beneficial would be their example! How cheering, how animating would it be to hear them say, "Come, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."

CHAP. VIII.

" But 'tis our God supports our frame,
 The God that built us first ;
 Salvation to th' Almighty name,
 That rear'd us from the dust."——WATTS.

*Unexpected delight——Life sometimes desirable even to
 a Christian——Meditation upon religion——The
 Lord's table neglected——what it requires——How
 young persons may be useful——An important event
 ——An affecting conversation.*

WHAT was the surprise and astonishment of Elworthy, when he visited his mother the following week, to see her considerably revived! Her countenance no longer pallid, but tinged with a gentle flush! As he approached her, she extended her hand, and exclaimed, "See what God has done! Since your last visit, my spirits are so much better, and my strength so much increased, that I am a wonder to myself! What if the Lord should restore me! and there is nothing too hard for him." "Oh, my mother!" returned he, "how can I express my gratitude to God for such inestimable blessings as I have received, and if you should be restored, my cup would indeed run over!"

"Life is at *all* times desirable, my dear son, but there are *some* peculiar circumstan-

ees which lead us, if agreeable to the will of God, to wish a longer residence in the body. A Christian should be willing to die or to live, according to the pleasure of God. Nothing but a good hope can reconcile us to part with all below, and hence the fears and distracted state of those who have no consciousness of pardon through the blood of Jesus. The apostle Paul desired to depart and to be with Christ, as far better than to exist here; yet while he desired this on account of his own personal enjoyment, he was content to abide in the flesh on account of the state of the churches. Need I say, my son, that on *your* account I feel happy at the prospect of restoration to health, and to behold you treading in the path that conducts to the regions of bliss, will be the summit of my happiness as to the present world."

We will leave Mrs. Elworthy for a time, to observe the transactions that occurred in the family of Mr. Le Monde, whose mind was still restless and disturbed, and whose suspicious eye darted by turns at Melville, Freeman, and Elworthy. The conduct of Melville had been *invariably* circumspect, and had placed him almost above suspicion itself. He was neither gay nor volatile. In the counting-house he was strictly attentive to business, and his leisure hours were still devoted to the improve-

ment of his mind. Although his dress was neat, and his appearance always genteel, it was far removed from extravagance, and although his deportment was polite and gentlemanly, it had nothing of the affectation of a *petit-maitre*. He read much, and reflected upon what he read. His favourite poet was Young, and he sometimes indulged in meditating upon a passage that struck his mind, and committed his thoughts to paper. The following is a specimen :—

RELIGION.

“Religion! thou the soul of happiness,
And, groaning Calvary! of thee, there shine
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;
There sacred violence assaults the soul,
There nothing but compulsion is forborne.”

REFLECTIONS.

“Such is the sublime description of religion, given by a favourite poet; the ‘soul of happiness, indeed! Ah! there is no happiness beside. This heart assents to the assertion. Every thing around proclaims it. Pleasure, wealth, honour, can afford nothing to delight the mind, nothing substantial. They are broken cisterns of comfort at the best. Could Alexander, could Croesus, could Belshazzar, speak, what a tale would they unfold! A world cannot satisfy the desires of the soul. India, Peru, and Mexico may pour forth their trea-

suers, but 'Gold says, not in me, and not in me the diamond.' Religion is the source, the soul of happiness—and have not I tasted it? have not I experienced its joys? cannot I exult in the humble hope that my sin is forgiven, and my person accepted in the beloved? Oh, Calvary! Calvary! thy cross is my hope, my foundation, my glory! Redemption! theme of angels! joy of sinful man! Oh, God, help me to give myself up to thy service, to join myself to thy people, to make thy cause my own, and to indentify myself with its prosperity. Help me to declare what thou hast done for my soul. Thy love constrains me, binds me to thyself by ties which eternity cannot burst asunder. Yes! thy people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God." R. M.

It may be seen by this extract from his memorandum book, that his mind was made up. He saw that it was his duty to attend to his Saviour's command, 'Do this in remembrance of me,' and he therefore intimated, by letter, his desire to the minister of the chapel which he attended.

It is a subject of deep regret, that the table of the Lord is neglected by so many, who continually reply to the exhortations that are delivered, "*I pray thee have me excused.*" Some plead their unfitness, others their youth, others their objections to certain characters

who partake of the Lord's supper; and hence the number of communicants is so small. The fears that operate upon the minds of some tender consciences are entitled to our respect. It is certainly awful to eat and drink "*unworthily*," but they who are chargeable with this, are persons who do it without examination; without enquiring if they have the marks and evidences of *genuine* disciples; if they have been convinced of their sins, and *humbled* on their account; if they have received Christ as their ground of pardon and acceptance before God, and especially, if their lives and tempers, their conduct at home and abroad, accord with their profession of love to God, and testify that their hearts are changed, and that they are new creatures in Christ Jesus. That very improper characters are found at the Lord's table must be admitted. They may not indeed be drunkards, nor whoremongers, nor adulterers, nor openly dishonest; but they may be busy bodies, tale-bearers, evil speakers, angry, passionate, revengeful, proud, conceited, lovers of pleasure, worldly minded, covetous. A loving, modest, peaceful temper should be cultivated by those who come to the Lord's table (where the agreement should be ratified and confirmed, from month to month) to *endeavour* "to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." What a profana-

tion is it of this sacred ordinance, when it becomes an instrument of qualification to a worldly office, or when it is used as a mere charm or passport to the enjoyments of the heavenly world!!

It is devoutly to be wished, that young persons who are truly and decidedly pious, that is, who fear God and keep his commandments, would conscientiously devote themselves publicly to Him, associate themselves with his people, and engage in works of benevolence and love; that our females would be ready to work for the poor, visit the sick, instruct the ignorant; and the other sex, take under their care the villages and hamlets in their vicinity, where the people, uncivilized and uninformed, know not the way of truth. How many of our pious youths might be usefully engaged in reading a sermon to some of their poor neighbours on the Lord's day!

To return to Robert Melville. Having addressed a respectful letter to his minister, as already remarked, he was requested to state his feelings and views on the subject of religion. His reply was extremely interesting, and discovered the kindness and love of God in impressing his mind at an early period with the necessity of conversion; the gradual manner in which he had been led into a knowledge of divine truth—the pleasure he had experi-

enced in hearing the word—and the fears that had frequently oppressed his mind—but that he was fully persuaded of the willingness and ability of Jesus to save sinners—that his mind was entirely fixed upon resigning himself to the laws of his kingdom, and notwithstanding he had reason to expect the reproach of some who were hostile to the vital principles of doctrinal and experimental religion, he was determined to confess Him before men, and to glory only in His cross. The introduction of young Melville to the table of the Lord was highly gratifying to the minister, who gave him a suitable and encouraging exhortation, in which he charged him to live mindful of that worthy name by which he was called ; to attend the house of the Lord regularly ; and to associate principally with the most spiritual part of the congregation ; to maintain a respectable moral character for honesty, integrity, sobriety ; to observe due respect to every individual ; and to be constantly watchful over his own soul ; “ May you, my dear young friend and brother,” said the minister, taking him by the hand, “ may you be a blessing to the church, an ornament to religion, and a useful member of civil society. I give you my right hand as a token of that sincere fellowship with which, in the name of this christian society, I receive you ; and may the blessing of God rest upon you, now and for ever.”

The more Melville reflected upon his privileges as a communicant, the more he discovered his obligations. He saw that how cautious soever he had been before, he must be still more so in future. Le Monde sometimes rallied him on the subject of his great attention to religion. "I fear, my dear Robert," said he, "that your mind may be injured by the severe task you impose on yourself. Is it not possible to carry our ideas of religion too far? May not a person be unreasonably precise? Religion is a deep subject, and studying it too closely may perhaps have an injurious tendency."

"Pardon me, honoured Sir," rejoined Melville, "but I do not think God can be loved too much, or served too diligently, when Scripture is the rule of faith and duty. The happiness I enjoy is superior to what I can describe. I have no melancholy, nothing to distress me, nothing to fear, or even to grieve me, but the thought that my conduct towards yourself and others may not be so correct and accordant with my profession of the Gospel as it should be."

"Make yourself easy on that head," hastily interrupted Le Monde, "I am satisfied, perfectly satisfied with all you do and say—only I fear least you should become too rigid—

"Will you allow a youth to speak?" said Melville, "but your kindness encourages me.—Religion, honoured sir, must be *all* or *nothing*. It allows not of a *divided* heart. The Scripture says, 'No man can serve two masters'—and 'He that will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God.' Worldly pleasure and religious enjoyment have no affinity, and therefore I have determined to renounce the world, and to live to God, resigning thus the transient bliss of time for the permanent felicity of eternity."

Le Monde heard with deep attention, and turned round for a moment while the involuntary tear dropped from his eye. It was a tear that betokened the assent of his understanding, and the feelings that had been aroused by the artless and fervent address of Robert Melville. "There must be a *reality* in religion," said he to himself, "there is something felt and enjoyed by this dear youth which I have never yet experienced. Yes, he possesses *principle*, that principle which gives manliness and consistency. In his religion I can see clearly united, doctrine, experience, and practice. It is the very religion I want, and *must* possess in order to enter heaven." Turning to Melville, he exclaimed, "Go forward, dear Robert, I would not impede your progress, for the world. Give thanks to the

Almighty for his great goodness to you, in directing your steps, I wish I were able to converse with you on these glorious subjects—but ah!..... I have been unprofitable, undeserving, a cumberer of the ground. Yet I hope I shall not ‘be hewn down and cast into the fire.’—Persevere in the paths of religion. Amidst all my thoughtlessness, I am decided in my opinion, that **NOTHING BUT TRUE PIETY CAN CONFER TRUE HAPPINESS.**”

CHAP. IX.

“Be sure thy sin will find thee out.”
Lento enim gradu ad vindictam sui divina procedit ira, tarditatem que supplicii gravitate compensat.—**VALER. MAX.**

“Divine anger proceeds with a slow step to punish the transgressor, and the weight of its punishment compensates for its delay.”

An affecting recital—The mystery revealed—Sin hardens the heart—Guilt brought home to the offender—Effects of dissipation stated—The fatal bill produced—The lofty humbled—The distress of Mr. Freeman, sen.—Forgiveness implored—Terms prescribed.

MR. LE MONDE had been taking an early walk one morning, and upon his arrival at his own door, he was accosted by a stranger, whose appearance was that of poverty and extreme dejection. “Pardon me, honoured

sir," said he to Le Monde, "distress is the only apology I can offer for this intrusion; I presume I am addressing the master of this house. Will you allow me to have some conversation with you in private?" "Certainly," replied Le Monde, "follow me, and I will most willingly listen to your communication." *(The stranger is conducted into a parlour, and continues his address.)*

"I am a tailor, residing in St. Martin's lane, and have a wife and several children. My name is Smart. Two years since, I was employed by a young gentleman to make a suit of clothes, for which I was paid; but since that time I have frequently supplied him with articles, to the amount of nearly eleven pounds, for which I have applied repeatedly, and received promise of payment, but in vain. About three weeks since, I called at his lodgings, and was told he had removed, they knew not whither, and I could discover no trace of him, till yesterday I saw him enter your warehouse; I remained in the street for some hours, but did not see him come out, and therefore I conjecture he is in your service."

Le Monde. Do you know his name?

Smart. Andrew Freer.

Le Monde. Freer! you mean Freeman.

Smart. No, sir, *Freer* was the name he gave me; perhaps his real name is Freeman. Have you a gentleman of that name;

Le Monde. I have; and from your description of him, it is likely that he is the person. Has he never offered to pay you any part of your bill?

Smart. Yes, sir, he did propose something to me, but (*pauses*) I could not comply.

Le Monde. Propose something you could not comply with! what do you mean?

Smart. He offered to pay me 5*l.* if I would exchange a bill of 35*l.*

Le Monde, (in great agitation.) A bill of 35*l.*! are you sure that you are correct?

Smart. Quite correct, sir; I was too poor to give him the difference; he left me, and I never saw him again till yesterday. Would you allow me to speak to him in your house?

Le Monde. Certainly, honest man; remain where you are, and I will send the servant with some breakfast for you. But on no account mention your business to any one. (*goes out.*)

Never did *Le Monde* feel so agitated and perplexed as at this moment. He retired to his room—sat for a few moments, and, kneeling down, prayed most earnestly that the Almighty would direct and preserve him from acting in any way unfeeling or improper in his conduct towards Freeman. He then retired to the breakfast room, where Mrs. *Le Monde*, Elworthy, and Melville, were waiting.

He endeavoured to be cheerful, but it was evident that care sat on his cheek. A beam of satisfaction struggled to make its appearance, but it was as constantly obscured by the heavy mist of anxiety.

Not a syllable escaped his lips relative to the stranger, except that a person had called upon him on business. He returned to Smart, and begged he would relate confidentially any other particulars that had come to his knowledge respecting Mr. Freer.

Smart proceeded.—“I am apprehensive, sir, that his character is not very good. I was not aware that he lodged in such a house....

Le Monde, (alarmed.) Explain yourself.

Smart. I mean, sir, that the character of the house is not at all reputable.

Le Monde. I understand you. Well I will ring the bell, and send for Mr. Freeman. (*Rings—the servant enters*)—“William, tell Mr. Freeman to come to me.”—(*Freeman enters.*) Take a chair, Mr. Freeman.

Smart. Your servant, sir, I hope you are well; I have not seen you for some time.

Freeman. I believe you are mistaken in the person. I do not remember to have seen you before.

Smart. Not seen me, Mr. Freer! after I have made so many clothes for you? not know Smart the tailor, in St. Martin's-lane?

Freeman. Oh, no, my friend! you never made clothes for me. My name is not Freer; I see plainly that you have mistaken me for another person.

Smart. Why, sir, did you not lodge in Dean-street?

Freeman. Never; I have resided with my parents from the days of my youth.

Smart. Why, sir, you surprise me! Surely you do not mean to be so cruel as to disown all transactions with me in the way of business, and that you are indebted to me in the sum of ten pounds and upwards?

Freeman. Indebted to you, sir? not to the amount of a shilling.

Smart. Cruel young man?

(*Elworthy enters.*) Mr. Freeman, you are wanted for a few minutes in the counting-house
(*Freeman and Elworthy retire.*)

Le Monde. Mr. Smart, are you sure that this is the young man for whom you made the clothes? May you not be mistaken in the person?

Smart. Oh, no, sir; I cannot be mistaken; I am positive he is the identical young man.

Le Monde. When he returns, allow me to speak to him, and I will endeavour to afford you some assistance. Meantime (*puts a guinea into his hand*) take that to help your present wants, and leave the rest to me.

(*Freeman re-enters.*) "Well, Mr. Smart, I hope you are quite satisfied that I am not the person you want?"

Smart. (shaking his head.)—I am quite positive that you *are* the person for whom I have made clothes, and———

Le Monde. I recommend you Mr. Smart, to go and make further enquiry into this business. Leave me your address, and if I do not send for you, call here again in the course of a few days. (*Smart retires.*)

(*Addresses Freeman.*) "The time is arrived, Mr. Freeman, when an explanation must take place between us. I have long entertained suspicions, which, alas! for you, are, I fear, too well founded. I have not been a stranger to your manner of life for many months past. Extravagance, dissipation, excesses, balls, theatres, select dinner parties at taverns, Sunday excursions, glass coaches, gigs, and saddle horses, cannot be supported at a trifling expense. No, sir, *the income of a clerk* will not do it. There must be other resources. Dissipation is the first step to fraud, to forgery, to ruin! You have denied all knowledge of the poor man who has at length found you out, and I am determined his injuries shall be redressed. (*Freeman offers to go.*) No, sir, remain here; I have much to say—I see you on the brink of

destruction, and never was destruction more imminent. You have indeed profited by your nightly visits to the theatre to such a degree, that 'THE ROAD TO RUIN' has become familiar to you, and in this road you are now running in full career. Poor deluded young man! *(sweeps)* my heart bleeds for you! The irreligion and dandyism of the day have ruined you. Your life is in my hands, and did not mercy plead on your behalf I would deliver you to justice. But your parents! Ah! have you no regard for them? Is all their kindness to be obliterated from your recollection? Thoughtless, wicked, imprudent youth! what will become of you?

The hard hearted Freeman stood unmoved. Hardened by the deceitfulness of sin; no remorse moistened his eye; no acknowledgment of his error proceeded from his lips—his conscience, seared as with a hot iron, rendered him insensible alike to terror and interest. To the repeated appeals of Mr. Le Mondelle never replied, but maintained a stiller, aggravating silence. He was not suffered to leave the house, and it was thought necessary to send for his father, and to desist the attendance of Smart, the tailor.

No interview could exhibit a more affecting scene.

For

The father of Freeman arrived full of grief and concern, dreading the worst. He was informed of all the events which had taken place, and the attempt of his son to avoid the payment of his tailor's bill. In the most tender and persuasive manner, young Freeman was requested by his father to relate the truth, but no intreaties could prevail. Poor Smart was at length introduced, and interrogated as to the result of his inquiries. He replied that he had been again in Dean-street, but that no other answer could be obtained, only that the young gentleman had a father living, and that his son was engaged at a merchant's in the city. But, added he, I am perfectly correct in my assertion, that this is the young gentleman who employed me; I saw him too frequently to entertain any doubt, and am now ready to swear to my debt.

Le Monde, (addressing himself to young Freeman.) Perhaps the bill which you wished Mr. Smart to exchange may assist your recollection. Do you recollect that circumstance?

Freeman, jun. Bill! what bill? I never offered any bill to you; Mr. Smart.

Smart. No, Sir! Have you forgotten the bill for 35*l.*

Freeman, jun. I know nothing of any bill.

Le Monde, (goes out and returns imme-

diate.) Mr. Smart, would you know the bill, if it were produced?

Smart. Certainly, Sir. I have a distinct recollection of it.

Le Monde. Look at *that*, (*holding out the bill.*) Is that the same?

Smart. The very same, Sir.

Freeman, jun. shrieks, exclaiming, "I am ruined, ruined for ever. (*falls on his knees*) Forgive me—save me."

His shrieks brought Mrs. Le Monde into the room, who instantly called for Elworthy and Melville to go to the assistance of Mr. Freeman the elder, who she perceived had fainted. After some minutes Elworthy and Melville were requested to withdraw, and *Le Monde* proceeded:

"For you, Mr. Freeman, I feel as a parent, and can sympathize in your grief and distress. Our children are fruitful sources of pleasure or of pain; but at all times of anxiety. None but a father knows a father's heart. Tenderness to you has caused me to overlook many things in your son's conduct, but the crisis is arrived, and every thing must now be arranged and finally settled. This fatal bill has been long in my possession, and I only waited the proper moment to produce it. The events of this day prove that dissipation is the forerunner of all evils. It involves

heavy expences—exhausts the most ample resources—leads to nefarious practices—destroys the reputation—blasts the character—and often renders the life a forfeiture to the injured law! While I feel as a father, and am disposed to mildness and forbearance, my country calls upon me to resign the guilty to merited punishment—that punishment is indeed heavy, and in the opinion of many, extreme.—Here Mr. Le Monde was interrupted by the sobs and cries of Freeman, while his father clung to the knees of Le Monde, and in the most piercing accents exclaimed, “O! my son! my son! Spare him! Spare him, I entreat you, for my sake, for his mother’s sake, for his soul’s sake——.”

Le Monde was silent. He strove to repress his feelings, and to restrain his tears—while his partner, in an agony of distress united her supplications. “My dear Le Monde,” said she, “Forgive him for my sake—consider his soul.”—“Ah!” said Le Monde, softly, “his soul!” and then paused.

It was an awful pause! life or death seemed to hang on the decision!—

At length he resumed—“If I forgive him, it can be only on certain conditions which I will name hereafter. But first I must have a candid and explicit confession of all the circumstances connected with the forgery of the

bill; this must be written and signed by Arthur, and delivered to me in two days from this time. Meanwhile, to you, Mr. Freeman, I commit your son, relying upon your honor to return with him on the day mentioned.

Mr. Smart, I will be your friend, and you will keep within your own breast, the painful occurrences of this day." "Rely upon me," replied Smart. "although poor, I bless God that I have a sense of honor and integrity, and can feel for the miserable." "Generous man," said the elder Freeman, "what can I say—you are indeed our preserver.—We are bound to you. Accept the thanks I cannot utter. Whatever you require shall be done." "Farewell," added Le Monde, "I can bear no more at this time; LET GOD HAVE YOUR GRATITUDE."

CHAP. X.

Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends;
Hard task! for one who lately knew no care,
And harder still as learnt beneath despair;
His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,
A sad importance saddens every day.

The Confession—Freeman leaves his Country—Effect on the Parents—Zeal for the cause of Truth—Visit to the Cottage at the eighth mile stone.

THE reader may form some idea of the feelings of the parents of Arthur Freeman,

lamenting a lost son; for in no other light could they regard him; his character was gone, and *character* is every thing to the young, who, says Dr. Knox, "should take great care to do nothing to stain their reputation; for if by some thoughtless actions or expressions, they suffer a mark to be impressed on them, it is but seldom that they can fully regain their character, though afterwards they are ever so circumspect; because many will view them with a suspicious eye, and easily listen to any tale against them."

Except being delivered up to public justice, nothing could be so humiliating to Arthur Freeman, as the narrative of his conduct, required by Mr. Le Monde, and yet it *must* be written, signed, and delivered; to evade it was altogether hopeless, he therefore yielded to the severe exactment, and shutting himself up in his room, wrote the following letter.

"Most injured Sir,"

"Humbling as is the task which you have justly imposed upon me, I submit with the deepest shame, and I hope, with a proper feeling of contrition for my aggravated faults.

"During my residence under my parents' roof, I was restrained from those follies and improprieties which afterwards marked my

conduct; had I followed their excellent advice, enforced by their example, I should not have swerved from the path of rectitude.

The insinuations of a man, whom I met accidentally at a tavern, first led me to think lightly of the Bible: he related to me some particulars in Paine's Age of Reason, insisted that there was no hereafter, and ridiculed the various representations concerning heaven and hell; I listened to his remarks with eagerness, and by degrees professed myself a convert to his opinions. The divine law had no longer any influence on my conduct; I thought lightly of the sabbath, laughed at public worship, despised, as imposters, the ministers of religion, derided all pious people as hypocrites and fanatics, cursed and swore to prove myself a gentleman, and acted upon the principle that my own pleasure was henceforth to be the law by which I was to be governed.

“As I attended no place of worship, the Lord's-day became the principal source for pleasure, and excesses of every kind; I soon found others of my own stamp, and we formed a kind of association which had no object but that of pleasure; sometimes we went into the country, dined, drank freely, and returned maddened with liquor; at another time we spent the day in sauntering about, either in the parks or at some tea garden in the vic-

nity of London: The way, in which the evenings were spent fills me with the deepest shame; whenever we met together, we planned something for a future night's frolic, such as breaking off brass knuckers and other genteel robberies of this description; destroying the street lamps, knocking down watchmen, breaking the windows of the peaceable inhabitants, and writing letters, by way of hoax, to injure the innocent, and in some cases, to destroy the peace and happiness of a family.

It was a principle laid down by my father, never to run into debt, and while I acted upon this principle, I was economical in my expenses, but as soon as I began to imitate my companions in their habits, manners, and dress, I found that my income would not satisfy the frequent inroads thus made upon it. New fashions were constantly brought forward; to be unfashionable was to be vulgar, and the form of the collar, skirts, waistcoat, and other articles of dress, was so frequently changed, that to meet the approbation of my thoughtless associates, new clothes were indispensably necessary. I applied to various tailors and discharged one debt in order to contract another, so that I was always in debt, and always under obligation to different persons from whom I borrowed money. I am ashamed to proceed and intreat you to al-

low me to pass over some events which I cannot put upon paper.

"To add to my crimes I resorted to gaming, and was introduced to a company of pretended gentlemen, who initiated me into the art of tricking and plundering the ignorant and unwary, but not till they had stripped me of every thing I could command.

"Let it not be imagined that during this period my conscience was never aroused to its duty. The lessons of morality and religion, which I received from my parents, frequently entered my mind; the example and conversation of Mr. Robert Melville often reproved and reproached me; I knew that I was acting wrong, and that my ruin was inevitable, but I determined to hate instruction, and drowned my convictions by drinking, or silenced them by false reasonings, or else dismissed them by a promise of future amendment.

"Thus I proceeded; and to crown my wickedness, I formed an acquaintance with a base female in Dean-street, where my hours were spent in riot and dissipation. This was the crisis of my wickedness; when my resources began to fail, I was urged for money and even excited to plunder.
How shall I proceed with the rest!
With shame and contrition I acknowledge that I have added to my other crimes that of

robbery too; your warehouse, injured sir, was the scene of my depredations; the goods taken away, were disposed of by one of those wretches known by the name of '*receivers of stolen goods.*' At length I drew the bill for 35*l.* and rashly signed your name: by means of a fictitious endorsement it was passed, and the rest you are acquainted with. Fearful of a discovery, I determined to relinquish my connexion with the unhappy woman in Dean-street, and withdrew to my father's wholly. I am constrained to say that wickedness and misery are intimately connected, and that to depart from religion and the instructions of good and tender parents is to leave the path of safety for *the road to ruin.*

"I am compelled to add, and oh! that I could testify it to every individual that attends the theatre under the hypocritical pretence of learning morality—I am compelled to add, that not one profitable lesson did I ever learn there; my object was not instruction, but pleasure, and I believe I speak what applies to the conduct of a vast majority of those who visit the play-house. And I would warn young men to avoid such places as they would the plague; the saloon, the boxes, the oaths, the profane expressions, the lewdness, &c. with which they must become familiar, tend to weaken all love to morality and virtue,

and prove that 'evil communications corrupt good manners.'

"That I repent of my past crimes I solemnly declare, but time and conduct alone, can prove my repentance genuine. I throw myself at your feet, intreating your forgiveness, and waiting your further commands. Should you desire any additional explanation, it shall be afforded by, injured sir,

Your most unworthy servant,

ARTHUR FREEMAN."

This letter was forwarded to Mr. Le Monde, with a request to know when Arthur Freeman should wait upon him. A time being fixed on, a long conversation ensued, and it was at length settled that Freeman should leave his native country, and not return to it again without the permission of Mr. Le Monde. In due time Freeman left his friends, his companions, and his pleasures, a striking instance of the truth of that scripture, which declares that "the way of transgressors is hard." The fate of her son brought upon his mother a dejection of mind, which first produced a total nervous debility, and led to a consumption, which terminated in her death. The elder Freeman, consoled by religion, the blessings of which he sought and found, sustained his

trouble under the hope, that as his son's life was preserved, he might eventually be led to seek the ways of life eternal.

The health of Mrs. Edworthy was so far restored as to enable her to return to her former habitation. Her son had not failed to visit his friend John Halmby, at the eighth mile-stone, whose conversation he found most profitable and encouraging. John Halmby was a man who enjoyed religion, and who endeavoured to gain some good from every discourse he heard. He accepted the *reproofs*, as well as the consolations, and not only *heard* but *practised*. His temper, which was formerly impetuous and irascible, had become so much improved and ameliorated, that he appeared altogether changed. He took an active part in every project of benevolence, and strove to provoke others to love and good works. By his zeal, he did provoke very many.

Prayer meetings were established by him in many villages around, in which the word of God was afterwards preached by the minister whom he attended. Nor was the power of religion confined to him; his wife and children were excited to do something for the cause of God. Sarah had her Missionary Box for Home and Foreign Missions, and her children became collectors amongst the poor neighbours, who contributed their weekly mite,

and by their united exertions no inconsiderable sum was raised annually.

Elworthy was anxious that his mother should visit John Holmly's cottage, and a day was fixed for the purpose. He accompanied her to the peaceful abode; but how great was the astonishment of Mrs. Elworthy, when she saw in Sarah Holmly a servant that had formerly lived with her. "Astonishing," said she, "Do I see Sarah Johnson? Is this the Sarah Holmly of whom I have heard so much?"

"Indeed it is, Ma'am. I did not say much to the young gentleman about it, nor did I ask him his name; but sure so like my dear master I never saw any one."

"Well, Sarah, I rejoice to hear the good account of your being so devoted to God."

"Ah! Madam, it was by God's blessing on the prayers and sermons of your dear husband. I appeared very inattentive while under your roof, and *would* leave you. I have often repented of my foolish conduct since, and frequently thought upon the mercies I enjoyed while I was your servant."

"It is a pity, Sarah, that servants do not more esteem the blessing of living in a pious family, where they are so much protected, and have the opportunity of doing so well for themselves."

"Tis very true, Ma'am. — How do

CHAP. XI.

- "Think of the power of solid virtue ;
- "Think on that providence that guards the good."

Johns.

*Difference between the righteous and the wicked.—
Both have influence.—Happy change in Eliworthy
—An interesting acknowledgment.—Piety re-
wards.—Reflections.*

In the preceding pages the reader has seen the evil of transgression, and the nature of the reward that sin bestows. There is and there will ever be a "difference between the righteous and the wicked," and no power, no artifice, can alter the decrees of God, that His Blessing shall be on the former, but that the latter shall suffer shame and eternal contempt. The writer of these pages is aware of the sarcasms cast upon "THE SAINTS," but the abuse of the irreligious is no reproach. Let those who fear God act upon the principles of the sacred volume; let them be consistent in their conduct, just in their transactions, and true to their engagements; let them shew piety at home as well as abroad; let them respect the *character* of their neighbours, and connect with all this, a sincere and unaffected piety, and they have nothing to fear from the lips or pens of Infidels, or of pretended Chris-

tians, who are properly denominated, 'men of the world, who have their portion in this life.'

The characters of Robert Melville and Arthur Freeman were diametrically opposite, yet they both possessed influence; 'Onesinner destroyeth much good,' and were it not, for the over-ruling providence of the Most High, the mischief effected by dissolute characters would be incalculable.——There are however, some in every age, who are 'valiant for the truth,' and cannot be seduced from their allegiance to God, nor diverted from their purpose of living to His praise. *They cannot be seduced*, for they are *kept* by Almighty power, through faith unto salvation. Such a character was Robert Melville, firm, undaunted, yet modest and humble. By the most obliging demeanour, by strict attention to business, by unimpeachable integrity, he gained the confidence of Mr. Le Monde, and by persevering in the same honourable course, he secured it. In the family he was kind to the domestics, and acquired their esteem, and by his courteous manners to Mrs. Le Monde, he became the object of her regards, and was treated by her as a son. In a word, his influence was beneficial in the best sense, for religion in Melville appeared so lovely and desirable, that from admiring its ef-

facts upon him, they desired to experience its power upon their own hearts.

Elworthy was soon noticed by Melville as an altered character. They became intimate associates, and walked to the house of God in company; the former united himself to the church of which the latter was already a member, and became exceedingly active and useful in the Sunday School. They who associated with Elworthy in his days of folly, endeavoured to ridicule him out of his attachment to religion, but all their efforts were fruitless, and they at length desisted, leaving him to pursue his new course, and follow the melancholy path of the *enthusiasts and hypocrites*! Such were the epithets by which they designated those who regarded the Lord's day, and endeavoured to conform their lives to the doctrines and duties of the Holy Scriptures.

One evening, after the business of the day was terminated, Mr. Le Monde commenced a conversation with Melville, in which he declared his entire satisfaction with his whole conduct, and his thankfulness to the Almighty for having sent him to reside in his house. "From the first moment of your entrance into my service," said he, "I have watched you with a vigilant eye; I have seen so much of the duplicity of many *pretenders* to religion, that

you cannot wonder that I should have entertained some suspicions with regard to you; I have known men that stood high in the esteem of their party, whose actions were altogether opposite to their profession. Unjust in their dealings, unkind in their conduct, malevolent, wrathful, defamatory, traducers of the characters of their friends as well as of their neighbours, they caused the ways of God to be despised, and religious persons to be disesteemed. All their religion was confined to public worship, and even their attendance in God's own house was rather to *admire* the preacher's talents than to practice the important lessons he communicated; or if he were not of the first rate, he was condemned, slighted, and often treated with marked disrespect. What most disgusted me was the *levity* of these men; their frivolity immediately on leaving the house of God! Ah! I exclaimed, can this be the religion of the Bible? I heard them talk of *promises* and *privileges*, but, "while they professed to know God, in *works* they denied him." These men so stumbled me, that at one period I determined to renounce religion altogether, and to reject the Bible entirely. Happily for me, I was not permitted to pursue this ruinous plan: the goodness of God still followed me, and gently led me to repentance. My conviction of the excellency of

religion was confirmed, if not altogether produced, by what I saw in you, and heard of you. Like all young men, you have had persons who have narrowly watched your conduct; for where there is much *professed*, much is *expected*. Whoever assumes a religious character, must be *different* from others in all respects. He must renounce worldly pleasures, and devote himself to those which are spiritual and holy; if he cannot do this, if the sacrifice is too great, he must resign all pretensions to religion, and join the society of the world. This, my dear Robert, I perceive, I feel, and am determined now to serve God, and espouse and promote, according to my best ability, the interests of his Gospel; convinced that the *whole heart* must be devoted, I desire to surrender it to Him, and to feel all the spirit of the words,"

" Take my poor heart just as it is,
Set up therein thy throne;
So shall I love thee above all,
And live to thee alone."

How delighted and gratified was Melville to hear a declaration of attachment to God, at once manly and ingenuous! and he had the joy to witness in the conduct of Mr. Le Monde, an illustration of its contents, and that whatever he did, he did it with his might. In his

family, religious duties were steadily performed,—his place in the house of God was never forsaken,—he did not forget prayer meetings nor weekly lectures,—he heard with attention and candour, and profited by what he heard,—his temper, which was once rash and impetuous, was, by watchfulness and prayer, become gentle and forbearing, while his liberality in private and in public was diffuse and extensive. The blessings of religion were enjoyed by his family, and he frequently expressed the happiness of his mind when he repeated—

“ Happy the man to whom He sends
Obedient children, faithful friends!
How sweet our daily comforts prove
When they are seasoned with His love.”

Melville continued with Mr. Le Monde three years after the expiration of the term of his apprenticeship, and then was admitted to a share in the business. In this new character, he conducted himself with the greatest propriety; active and diligent in the affairs of the world, and zealous in the cause of God. Obedient to his parents, kind to his friends, faithful to his engagements, obliging to his inferiors, he acquired the confidence and esteem of all, and even his enemies (and no man is without them) were constrained to acknowledge “that excellence they could not reach.”

We have traced, in this recital, the striking "contrast" between religion and impiety, and the evils inseparable from a life of dissipation and excess. To assert our attachment to God, requires firmness and courage, and to resist the temptations of the lovers of pleasure, demands a continued application to God for strength and grace. On all sides, it is admitted, that the metropolis abounds with dangers, and those who have no principle to guide them, are liable to fall an easy prey to the snares laid for them; but piety is a safeguard, and, like a skilful pilot, will conduct the vessel into a secure haven.

Let the example of Freeman be a warning to my young readers, to avoid extravagance—one wrong step leads to a second, and after the first error has been committed, it is impossible to foresee what will be the subsequent miseries. Happy are those, who, like Elworthy, repent in time, and highly honoured are they, who are instrumental in turning a sinner from the error of his way! The poor in this world are often rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. John Holmly lived respected, highly useful in his station, and particularly so to Elworthy, who always remembered with pleasure the cottage at the eighth mile stone.

The great object of living is to do good, and there is not an individual destitute of the

power of benefiting society. Every one has his talent, if he will use it. Sunday Schools, Bible and Missionary Societies, are constantly appealing to our beneficence and exertions, and saying, 'Come over and help us'; and although they may be attacked in their march of usefulness by the profane, the worldly, and the irreligious, the opposition made against them shall but excite zeal, and increase activity; and as for the enemies of vital religion, "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." He has set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and his religion shall eventually triumph over infidelity and superstition, profanity and vice, and all ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God!

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?"



J. H. MORGAN, PRINTER, ABERGAVENNY.









